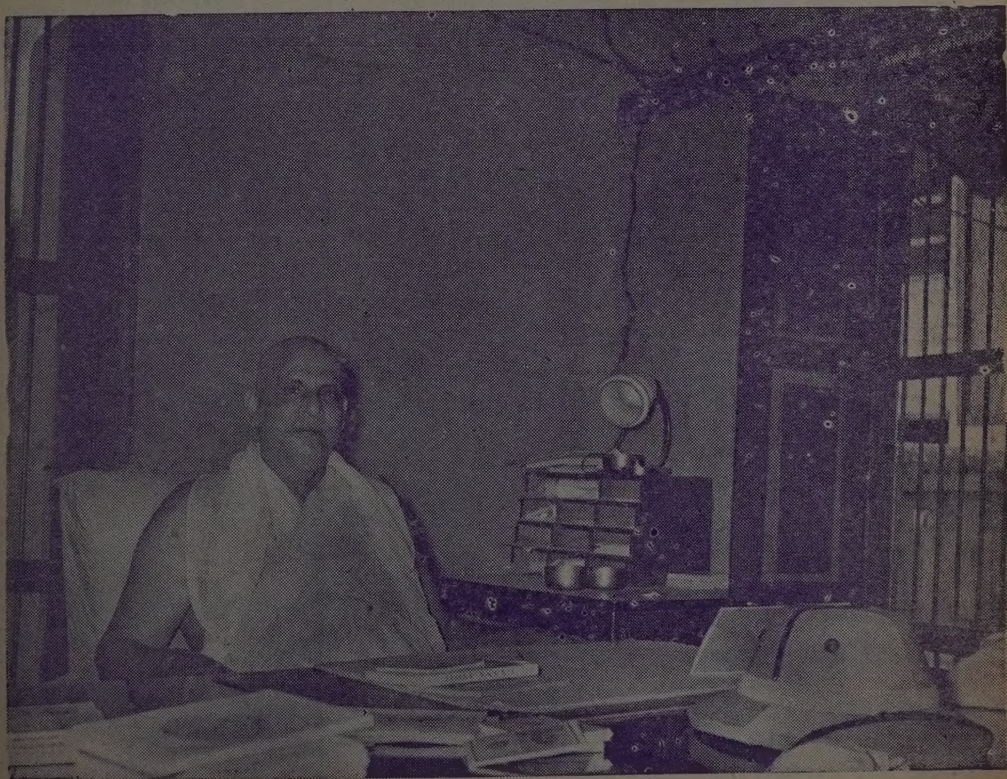


The *Divine Life*

Monthly Journal of the Divine Life Society



Issued from Sivananda Nagar, Rishikesh, Himalayas

MA
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15th May 1956

Sri Werner Jung

Sydney.

Ethical discipline is a necessary pre-requisite for philosophical enquiry and self-realisation.

Ethics is an enquiry into the nature of good, and is concerned with an analysis of the concepts of good and bad, virtue and vice, right and wrong.

Goodness is love in action.
 Supreme goodness is God.
 Goodness is virtue, benevolence
 May Lord bless. Sivananda

RELIGIOUS CALENDAR

[Sivananda Nagar]

(16th May to 15th June, 1956)

May

- 20 Ekadasi
- 22 Pradosha Puja
- 23 Narasimha Jayanti
- 24 Buddha Jayanti,
Purnima,
Kurma Jayanti, Lunar
Eclipse
- 31 Poor-feeding Day

June

- 1 Thirty-second Sanyasa
Anniversary of Swami
Sivananda
- 5 Ekadasi
- 6 Pradosha Puja
- 8 Amavasya,
All-Souls Day
- Special Ganqa and Lakshmi
Puja on all Fridays



DIVINE LIFE

Volume Eighteen

May 1956

Number Five

Ideal Yoga

Sri Swami Sivananda

[*Excerpts from a Recent Discourse*]

Some Yogic students think that only he who can fly in the air, walk on the water, and do such other miracles, can be called a Yogi. It is a sad mistake. To be peaceful, to be calm, to radiate joy, to have an intense aspiration to realize God, to have the spirit of service, and devotion, to be self-controlled,—this is the real Yoga. Flying in the air is not Yoga. Why should one aspire to fly like a bird after attaining the human birth? You must have a willing heart to serve everybody and a desire to possess all divine virtues. This is Yoga.

Your ideal should be to be good, and to do good. Be ever willing to share what you have with others. You should have a knowledge of the scriptures, devotion to your preceptor, saints and sages. Even Nirvikalpa Samadhi is not necessary. Why do you want to get yourself merged in the Absolute? Have a small veil of individuality and serve here as *nitya-siddhas*. Possess divine qualities, and move as a divine being on this earth. Aspire not for powers. Powers will come by themselves. Possess all noble virtues. Be free from hatred and malice. Elevate others by your own example.

Spread the message of the Rishis. Lead a righteous life. Speak the truth. Worship mother as God, father as God, teacher as God, guest as God. Give; but give with modesty. Give with goodwill. Give with love.

There is one, eternal Atma, one universal Consciousness that dwells in the hearts of all. Realize this through aspiration, renunciation, concentration, purification.

Control anger. Do not get irritated through misunderstanding. Try to understand everybody. Understand the feelings of others. Bear insult. Bear injury. Love that man who persecutes you. Be ever intent on the welfare of all—*Sarva bhuta hite ratah*. You should practise these—not merely study the *Brahmasutras* and the *Upanishads*. The *Upanishads* should come from your heart through purification, through service.

Selfless service is the highest thing on this earth. Service will make you divine. Service is divine life. Service is eternal life in God. Service will give you Cosmic-Consciousness—service that is selfless, without attachment. But nobody wants to

serve! Everybody wants to be served by others. You will have to kill the ego. You will have to pulverize it, make it a powder. You will have to extract oil from your bones and burn it for six months. Such is the toil, as it were, to progress in the path of Self-realization.

Be good; do good. This is the essence of the teachings of all scriptures and prophets of the world.

Those who want inner life are very few. All are thirsting for happiness, but they do not know wherefrom they can get happiness. They search for it in wealth and material possession. Maya is clever. She never allows people to taste the bliss of an

inner life in the Atman. Deluded by her power, man thinks that there is no transcendental realm, that there is nothing beyond the senses. "Eat, drink, and be merry." This has become the motto of life. The path to the realm of God is open only to those who have got the Divine Grace.

May you all know the true import of Yoga, and base your life on selfless service to humanity with Atma Bhava, and on the development of all divine virtues. May you all have sustained aspiration, practise deep meditation, and attain Self-realization. May you all shine as *nitya-siddhas*, radiating joy and peace all around.

Schedule

In accordance with the decision of serializing the *World Parliament of Religions Commemoration Volume*, in part, the articles connected therewith that appear in these pages pertain mainly to its *Islam*, and partly to its *Sufism*, and *Sikhism* sections. The following are some of the articles that have also been incorporated therein, in addition to those connected therewith that have already appeared in the preceding issues of *The Divine Life*:

Sec. VIII. Confucianism, by Swami Sivananda; *Analects of Confucius*, and *Sayings of Confucius* by Charles A. Wong; *Mo-Tze* and *Ahimsa*, by Prof. Chou Hsiang-Kuang.

IX. Taoism, by Swami Sivananda; *Lao-Tze*, by Dr. C.H. Yeang; *Sayings of Chuang-Tze*, by Herbert A. Giles.

X. Shintoism, by Swami Sivananda.

XI. Judaism, and *Analects of Jewish Scriptures*, by Swami Sivananda.

XII. Christianity, by Swami Sivananda; *Christ-Consciousness*, by Mark Halpern; *Yoga and Christianity*, by Edward Hain; *Vedanta and Christianity*, by Michael Sawtell, and Hanna Herrmann.

XIII. Islam, by Swami Sivananda; *Basic Concepts of Islam*, by Dr. S.A. Latif; *Islamic Mysticism*, by Dr. M.H. Syed; *Islamic Formulae of Meditation*, by Anwarul Hasan.

XIV. Sufi Outlook, by Prof. Bhutani; *Sufism—Ancient Knowledge of Man*, by Pir Bawa.

XV. Sikhism, by Swami Sivananda; *Faith of Baba Nanak*, by Giani Dalip Singh.

The Message of Islam

Sri Gauri Prasad

[Retired Judge, Swargashram]

The term *Islam* signifies, in the first instance, to be tranquil, to have done one's duty, to be at perfect peace, and finally, to surrender oneself to Him with whom peace is made. So, Islam really signifies being at peace and living in accordance with God's words and commands, leading the life of a righteous man.

The Prophet (Mohammad) regarded religion as a straight, natural law for men to follow. According to the Prophet, man was the vicegerent of God on earth in a very real sense, inspired of his Creator to know what is wrong and what is right for him. (Koran, xci, 78); and it is only when man refuses to follow out the highest and the best in him and deliberately chooses the lower and the worse in him that he approximates to the lowest brute. Religion was thus the natural bent of a free, unbiased mind of man. In the language of the Gita, a man's *swadharma* was his natural religion. Similarly, the Holy Koran says: 'Set thy purpose for religion as a man by nature upright—the nature (framed) of Allah, in which He hath created man. There is no altering (the laws of) Allah's creation. That is the right religion; but most men know not.' (xxx,30)

Common Source

According to the Prophet, men were originally of one religion (which he named Islam), and when differences arose, Allah sent Prophets as bearers of good tidings and as warners, and revealed therewith the Scripture with the truth that it might judge between mankind concerning that wherein they differed. (ii,213)

We find in the Holy Koran statements repeatedly made that divine messages of wisdom and of truth were sent to all

nations all over the world by Allah through an endless succession of Prophets and Seers. It will thus be seen that the Islam of Mohammed is not a new religion; its significance lay in restoring to the Muslim world, in a spiritually dark period of Arabia, the pristine glory of the faiths of the Prophets and Seers of bygone ages to their original purity and sublimity. In fact, every religion in its place is an exposition of the Divine Life in humanity, and so is Islam.

Brotherhood

In Islam, all humanity is regarded as one vast brotherhood, with Allah as their Creator and Master who looks upon them all as equal. The Holy Koran says: "O mankind, lo! we have created you, male and female, and have made you nations and tribes, that ye may know one another. Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Lo! the Allah is Knower, Aware." (xlix,13) The Prophet himself has said, "Be ye all worshippers of God, and brother to one another, like as God has commanded you."

Sectarianism Disfavoured

"O ye apostles! eat of good things and act aright; verily, I know what ye do. And, verily, this your religion is one religion, and I am your lord; so fear me. But they have cut up their religion among themselves into sects, each sect rejoicing in its tenets. So leave them in their error till a time." (xxiii,51-54)

Overbearing conduct in religious matters was also reprobated by Mohammad. He preached thus; "They say, there is no obligation upon us in respect to the Gentiles. They speak a lie concerning Allah knowingly. Nay, but he who fulfilleth his pledge and

wardeth off (evil); for lo! Allah loveth those who ward off evil. Lo! those who purchase a small gain at the cost of Allah's covenant and their oaths, they have no portion in the Hereafter. Allah will neither speak to them nor look upon them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He make them grow. Theirs will be a painful doom." (iii, 75-77)

Service of Humanity

"All creation is the family of God, and of all creation the most beloved of God is he who does most good to His creatures. The Merciful God is merciful to those who are merciful; be then ye merciful to those who are on the earth, so that He who is in Heaven may be merciful to you God will not be merciful to him who is not merciful to men." (*Sayings* 269, 508 & 511)

"God is always ready to help His worshipper, so long as the worshipper is ready to help his brother." (1017) The Holy Koran says the very same thing in not very different language: "Whosoever surrendereth his purpose to Allah while doing good, he verily hath grasped the firm hand-hold." (xxxi, 22). "Good deeds annul ill deeds." (xi, 114) "Ah, what will convey unto thee what the ascent is. (It is) to free a slave, and to feed in the day of hunger an orphan, near of kin, or some poor wretch in misery, and to be of those who believe and exhort one another to perseverance and exhort one another to pity." (xc, 12-18). "And whoever hopeth for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work and make no sharer of the worship due unto his Lord." (vii, 11)

Oneness of God

The entire elementary teachings of Islam commence with the simple belief in the oneness of God. In fact, the whole edifice of the faith of Islam is built on the infallible doctrine of *tawheed* or the faith of 'Blessed Oneness.' Throughout the whole

of the Holy Koran this singular belief in one God has been effectually taught to the Muslims in the simplest way. Over and over again, nature has been called to bear witness to the existence of God, and all rational and relevant evidences have been cited to prove His Oneness.

Unconscious of the deeper meaning of this Blessed Oneness, the average Muslim with his simple beliefs of God's eternity, omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience, mercy, benevolence, etc., is apparently content with leading a life according to the injunctions of the Code of his religion as he understands them, always placing his deep trust in His Mercy for all his sins of omission or commission. To him, his God is more or less a personal and practical God (by no means a physical one). What is required is the fullest conception, nay, the innermost consciousness and a complete realization of oneness, unity in diversity,—all in God and God in all. The following are the various stages of arriving at this happy end:—

- (1) An implicit and strong faith in the Oneness of God,
- (2) Sincere seeking of Oneness,
- (3) Knowing of Oneness, and
- (4) Realization of Oneness.

Realization

Islam enjoins *realization* as the first condition of a human life, the highest of all created life (*ashraf-ul maghluakat*). Development of soul-consciousness, peace of mind and ever-increasing happiness are the attendants of these stages of spiritual growth. Realization of oneness completely supersedes individual consciousness. All limitations vanish; the finite becomes infinite. Having crossed all barriers of the limited self, the *Mowahhid* (the master of oneness) is able to lead a perfectly harmonized life, a life of purity and divine

love, only caring for others and ready to make any sacrifice in the service of humanity. He then becomes identical with Absolute Knowledge, Absolute Bliss, Absolute Eternity (Satchidananda).

The Holy Koran alludes to this state in the following verse :

*Hal ata' alal insani, heenum minuddahri
lam yakun shaian mazkoora.*

(Has man realized that state when he was what could not be described)

The realization of this Oneness being the sole aim of life in Islam, "acts" are encouraged or discouraged according to their helpfulness or impedance in the progress of man towards the desired End.

The Five Pillars of the Faith of Islam,

best calculated to realize the Blessed Oneness, are :

(1) The belief in the unity of God and the acknowledgment of Mohammad as a Prophet of God,

(2) Prayer,

(3) Fa-ting,

(4) Charity, and

(5) Pilgrimage.

It will thus be seen that Islam, though comparatively young in age as a religious Faith, embraces all the fundamental and basic principles of human life to enable mankind to attain Self-realization on this earth-plane, and is, in its essence, identical with all ancient great religions of the world. *Amien!*

On Islamic Culture

Sri G.S.A. Karim Suhrawardy

[Retired Inspector-General of Police, Madras]

India has been the land of many religions, cults and civilizations. She has evolved a harmony out of them. To many ancient religions, India is the land of birth, and to many others she is the land of adoption. She has honoured them all alike, with her matriarchal benediction. The religions and cults that came seeking her were welcomed and maintained by her with her traditionally noble hospitality. She embraced them with a motherly affection; she absorbed and assimilated many of their virtues. She even got herself surnamed by them as "India," "Hind," etc., though her own name was and is Bharatavarsha.

Islam, like Christianity, which came from abroad, found in India a congenial soil for growth and expansion. The great treasures and virtues of the Islamic cult were imbibed by her largely in the course of centuries of her association with it. The

Islamic culture greatly influenced her life, thought and action. Islam gave us a new philosophy, a new culture, and a new civilization. Our art, literature and poetry were enriched by the Islamic influence, and its great legacy to us is the architecture which shines even today as the pride and glory of India. The greatest message that Islam delivered to India is the message of brotherhood and equality between man and man, equality and fraternity being the very essence of Islamic religion.

One Reality

The assimilation of different religions, cultures, and civilizations has enriched our life, effecting harmony, tolerance, mutual sympathy and goodwill among the people, whatever be the religious faiths they belonged to. There prevailed a unity in diversity, and a beauty in realization of the fundamental unity of all religions. Each religion proclaims in its own way the omnipresence,

omnipotence and omniscience of the Supreme Being who is the same in all religions. The sacred Islamic formula *La Ilaha Illallah*, proclaiming the supremacy of Allah, and the sacred Gayatri Mantra of *Om bhoor bhuva swaha*, proclaiming the greatness of Bhagavan, all ring the same note about the Supreme Lord. The terms *Allah* and *Bhagavan*, though different, because of the difference in languages in which they are expressed, are both synonyms of the same Supreme Being, which is universal.

It is the realization of the oneness of God that is the heart of the celebrated prayer-song of Mahatma Gandhi, that is, the *Ram-dhun* song of 'Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram,' which brings out with emotion the fundamental truth that *Iswara* and *Allah* are one and the same.

Religious Harmony

The said prayer-song so loved and liked by the Mahatma does not attempt at creating for the first time the religious harmony in us. But it only puts, in a melodious and moving way, the religious harmony already existing in our land. Who can dare to deny the existence of this religious concord in the life of our people? There are several centres in our land, shining even today as sacred shrines of that religious harmony. The great shrines at Ajmere, Delhi, Agra, Panipath, Trichinopoly, Nagore, and scores of other places, are a glorious example of unity and religious toleration among the masses of different religious persuasions. At these places, people in thousands congregate, making no distinctions of caste, colour and creed. A similar religious unity is found in other shrines in Goa and Velanganai in Tanjore District, where the Church receives a majority of its pilgrims from among the Hindus.

Are we not witnessing that harmony and tolerance right now here, and at this

very spot (Parliament of Religions Convention)? Are not we, of different religious faiths and persuasions, participating with pride and pleasure, in this gathering? In such gatherings we read unity. In such unity lies our strength, the strength of the one family of God. Of different religious faiths though we are, we are one and the same, bound in loyalty by the common nationality and the common unity.

A Civilization By Itself

The common people are generally of the impression that the religion of Islam is primarily a system of theology coupled with the person of the Prophet and his teaching as embodied in the Koran and his Sayings. But Islam is something more than this. It is a civilization by itself. It is an embodiment of true culture with distinctive features in social, economic, political and intellectual structure. It covers a multitude of people of different races, and rational traditions, and yet linked together in a harmonious bond. There is yet another distinctiveness about the geographical position of the Muslims in the world. It extends along the Atlantic sea coast of the West Africa through Sudan, southern coasts of the Mediterranean Sea, Egypt and Western Asia, and by the shores of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea into Siberia and eastwards to Mongolia, down the East African Coast to the Island of Madagascar; and across the mountain ranges of Afghanistan into the plains of India; then from India to Malayan Peninsula and extending across East Indian Archipelago, till it ends in the south of the Phillipine Islands. Outside these zones, isolated areas are found in the western frontiers of China and in South Africa.

If you make out a special map of Islamic countries in the world, it will look like two huge crescents with horns radiat-

ing from one centre in Western Asia. There are 270 to 280 millions of Muslims in these lands. They are more than the population of the western hemisphere, i.e., North and South America put together. Of these over 100 millions are in India and Pakistan, 50 millions in Indonesia, about 40 millions in Western Asia, about 20 millions in China and Siberia, over 50 millions in Africa where they exceed by many times the followers of all other organized religions put together and in fact they are one-third of the population of the continent of Africa. There are also several millions of Muslims in Europe, particularly in the Balkan States and Turkey. It is this position of Islam in the world, which at one time was looked upon by the European powers as a Pan-Islamic danger. In spite of the followers of Islam being scattered so widely and diversely in various lands, the one astonishing feature is that despite so many factors which create divisions, such as customs, habits, rituals and thoughts, pertaining to their own locality, the uniformity of its civilization and outlook of life remain unchanged through all these years.

In a wider sense, the Koran often repeats that Islam is the religion of every prophet who came down to this earth with the Word of God. So it is at once both oriental and occidental in its outlook, culture and service. It embraces in its fold everyone who believes in the oneness of God and the mission of God's Prophet. It recognizes the prophets of other faiths wherever they may have served humanity with the Word of God. In order to promote intercourse among its followers and the rest of humanity, it has introduced a system of daily prayer-meeting, at least five times a day in their own locality, once a week in a central place in their own town, and once a year at Mecca, the birth-place

of Islam. This was instituted with a view to strengthen the unity among Muslims and fraternity and cordiality with their neighbours. The institution of the celebration of the Prophet's birthday once a year is another agency designed to promote the common bond of spiritual intercourse not only between the followers of Islam, but also between peoples of other faiths and persuasions, so that the flame of fraternity, kindled by the great Prophet may be kept burning through all ages.

Meaning of Islam

Islam literally means 'surrender,' surrender to the Will of God,—Peace. Islam is the name by which the religion preached by the Prophet Mohammad who appeared in Arabia over 1,300 years ago, is known. Islam is commonly known as "Mohamadanism," a name adopted in imitation of such names as Christianity and Buddhism but quite unknown to the Muslims themselves. Our claim is that the religion of Islam is as wide in its conception as humanity itself. It is a League of many nations. It did not have its birth from the teaching of our Prophet. On the other hand, it was equally the religion of the prophets who went before him. Islam is thus the religion of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and the hosts of other Prophets who preached the Word of God to man in various parts of the world, from time to time.

Islam is not meant for one people, one age, one country. It requires that the faithful should believe that all the great religions of the world were revealed by God, and as such it lays down the basis of peace and harmony with other faiths. It is a historical faith, and its founder is a historical character. Every act of the founder is open to scrutiny in the light of history, and the Holy Koran has stood the histori-

cal test of thirteen and half centuries, and I may also mention that in Islam, deeds are as essentially a component part of religion as belief. You will therefore appreciate the fact that the teaching of Islam is not shrouded in myths and stories. The subject is somewhat comprehensive and I shall confine myself to the following aspects of it only: brotherhood of man and service of humanity, freedom of conscience, reverence to authority, position of women in Islam, Islam's attitude towards gambling, promiscuity, usury, charity and labour.

Brotherhood of Man

At a time like the one we are passing through, when human society is largely sunk to its lowest depths spiritually and morally, when we see around us hopeless degradation of society and when our horizon is surcharged with dark clouds of corruption, dishonesty, moral depravity, want of trust and confidence, I fancy the immediate need is to propagate the brotherhood of man with a view to serve humanity. In spite of many defects in the religious life of Muslims, a spirit of brotherhood and equality is recognized among them all over the world and so, too, their feasibility in social life as a practical idea and achievement. No difference between man and man is recognized. Islam recognizes no individual class-distinctions in its ranks. It has characterized mankind as one family. It sounds a death-knell to all superiority or inferiority complex based on rigid social distinctions. Every believer is our brother; the lowest among the faithful can claim equality with the highest. There is no such thing as social difference in Islam. We know no untouchability. So our brotherhood is the brotherhood of entire humanity, binding man to man, nation to nation, and state to state. In short, under Islam all are equal, all are

dedicated to the service of humanity.

Absence of Bigotry

Freedom of conscience is another practical lesson which Islam offers to the world. Our attitude towards other religions, faiths and persuasions is summed up in the two following quotations from the Koran:

'Let there be no compulsion in religion.'

'Unto you your religion; unto me my religion.'

Often it is said against Islam that it was spread with sword. The very word *Islam* means, as I said before, Peace; and our Holy Scripture is full of passages breathing a spirit of peace, goodwill and love. It is a historical fact that Islam was tolerant to the Jews, the Christians and other classes of people who came under its influence in the days of its rule over various parts of the world. It is well-known that the Christian Church in Spain during the Muslim rule was given extensive lands and large revenues. Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall*, mentions that the Muslim rulers in Spain transcribed, in Arabic, versions of the 'Canons of the Councils' in Spain, for the use of the Clergy in the Moorish Kingdom. Haroon-al-Rashid introduced a number of clerical schools and appointed a Christian director of those schools. You might be knowing how the much-misunderstood Turk has treated his enemies even in the battle-field during the first world-war. The Bulgarians attacked Turkey. They reached Chatalija and it was expected that the city would be captured at any moment. Just then a Greek Prelate died in Constantinople. The good Turk even in those anxious moments made ready to give an imposing public funeral to the dead Christian prelate. Should Europe still accuse Muslims of intolerance?

It is often said that Islam spread through sword. We had the Koran in one

hand and the sword in the other. Why did we do so? Every student of history knows that in the early days of Islam, the Muslims were subjected to the most torturous persecutions. They were flayed alive, burnt alive, stoned to death, and all sorts of cruelties were inflicted on them. When they found that their enemies were bent on exterminating them, there was no other go than to defend themselves, and in self-defence Muslims had to handle the sword. But the real sword that spread the message of Islam far and wide was the sword of Koran—the Word of God. The letters which the Prophet of Islam wrote to the Kings of Abyssinia, Persia, Syria and other places, clearly prove the point. One such letter in the seventh year of Hijra by the Holy Prophet to Maquaqus, the Christian King of Egypt, was discovered in the year 1858 by some French travellers at a convent in Upper Egypt. It is now preserved in Istanbul. Dr. P. Bedger deciphered the letter and the contents are the same as we find in authentic traditions.

The Koranic injunction on religious conversion is: "If they embrace Islam they surely follow the right way; but if they turn their backs, verily unto you is the preaching only."

Causes of Disunity

You will ask me if the religion of Islam is so pacific and tolerant, why is it then that there had been so much trouble in India often resulting in bloodshed between the Hindu and the Muslim communities, in the name of religion, over questions of "music before mosque," and "cow slaughter," etc.

The trouble is that we have not approached this issue from a social point of view, as we should have done. The issues were often fought from religious and political standpoints, though in my opinion neither

religion nor politics has a direct bearing on them, for we have been told by the most learned authorities, on both sides, that neither Hinduism nor Islam will be in danger of effacement if music is stopped before a mosque, or a cow is not slaughtered, and likewise, these issues need not alter our political outlook. But, unfortunately, these two formidable weapons had been used in nearly all the Hindu-Muslim troubles based on these issues. Analyze the issues critically, and you will come to the conclusion that this is essentially a social problem, and certainly adjustable if it is approached in a spirit of give and take.

Islam and Cow Slaughter

"Cow-killing" has, unfortunately, been a perpetual source of bitter feeling between the Muslims and Hindus. It is our duty to find a remedy. It may help us to trace the origin of sacrificial rites. On the occasion of the festival of Id-ud-zuha, the Muslims celebrate the historical sacrifice by Prophet Ibrahim (Biblical Abraham). But Ibrahim did not sacrifice the cow, nor is the sacrifice of a bovine especially enjoined in our Scripture. On the other hand, camel or sheep is more frequently mentioned in connexion with the sacrificial rites. How many of our Hajjees (pilgrims) have sacrificed cows in Arabia, the home of Islam, and if they have not done so, have they disregarded any injunction of Islam? Then, why do we view this question of cow-sacrifice from a different angle in India?

The Emperor Babar, one of the greatest monarchs of his age, enjoined on his son, Humayun, respect to the religious sentiments and even the prejudices of the Hindus, and he particularly mentioned the cow as an animal venerated in India. Amir Habibullah Khan, King of Afghanistan, a pious Muslim, discountenanced the sacrifice of cows. The Kashmiri

Muslims who tenaciously adhere to the tenets of Islam, believe that cow-killing is not an injunction of our religion. If other Muslims share these views, they will not be guilty of violating the Islamic commandment.

That the blood and flesh of animals do not reach God is an accepted religious dictum. This humanitarian view is in entire accord with our conception of the Creator and His creation. The parade of sacrificial rites ought not to be countenanced when it is hurtful to a section of people. There are many other communities who eat beef, but they do not hurt the susceptibilities of their neighbours by parading the sacred and adored animal for slaughter.

In the light of these facts, I earnestly appeal to my Muslim brethren in the North (we Muslims in the South do not generally indulge in cow-sacrifice) to re-examine their views on this particular form of sacrifice and test its true significance, and thereby readjust their relations with the Hindus and thus render a service of incalculable value and importance to the cause of peace in this country.

Religious Unity

The time has come when we should put an end to mutual bickerings. Why waste time over the non-essentials? I cannot sufficiently emphasize the need of Hindu-Muslim unity. In Egypt, you see the Christian priests in Muslim mosques, and the Ulema of Islam in Christian churches. In Egypt, Muslims and Christians stand united and the solidarity of the people is not merely political, but it is vital to the existence of the nation. Hindu-Muslim unity, to be vital in this country, must not be a jugglery of the opportunists. It must be true and sincere. The spiritual idealism of these faiths should make us one.

There is a story that certain men travel-

led a long distance in order to listen to the voice of God. They reached a sanctuary. They sat on its steps; they wanted to hear the voice. Some one passing by asked why they were there. They said, "We have waited but the voice has not yet spoken." Alas! They were sitting on the steps outside. They had no fellowship with other people. They did not know that the gates of the sanctuary would be flung open only when all would enter together the shrine within, where the voice was speaking. Here in India we, too, have travelled long distances; we are sitting on the outer steps, while the one God within summons us to have fellowship with one another.

There is much in the faiths and cultures of Islam and Hinduism, which both can appreciate and be proud of. The movement of synthesis in religion initiated by Guru Nanak owes a great deal to the study of Islam and Hinduism. Guru Nanak practised what he preached. Let us therefore strive to make religious unity a matter of fact, and not merely an idea. It is well-known, how the Hindu Raja of Umerkot sheltered the Muslim King Humayun, and how the Muslim King Akbar built a statue to the memory of Hindu Rana Pratap Singh and how the Caliph of Baghdad invited Hindu scholars of Sindh to his court, and how the Muslim Kings had Hindu Ministers and Generals and *vice versa*. It is a matter of common occurrence in villages where Muslims, Hindus and other classes of people sit together after the day's work, singing together the simple old melodious songs under the open sky, forgetting that they belong to different faiths and feeling only their unity as children of the common soil, as worshippers of one God. I wish this spirit pervaded all over the country, particularly in the cities where communal troubles originate. National progress

is impossible without our inter-communal solidarity.

Position of Women in Islam

Woman under Islam was elevated to a status which she never enjoyed previously in Arabia and elsewhere. Her rights are safeguarded by law. She has all the rights which man enjoys. The right that a husband has to remarry after a divorce or death of a wife is also extended to a wife to remarry after divorce or death of a husband. In case of disagreement which cannot possibly be set aright between the husband and the wife, each has liberty to separate and choose other partners whom they may desire. She has a share in her husband's, parent's, brother's, sister's, children's, and some other relation's property, as they have in hers. Islam conferred these rights and privileges upon women 1350 years ago, and they are very much applicable to this day.

While discussing this subject I may say a word on polygamy. Islam permits it but under certain extraordinary conditions, viz., if the wife is unfit to discharge her duties and responsibilities, and as such, the husband is given freedom to a certain limit, provided he can treat his wives justly and equitably and maintain and protect them.

It must be remembered that this permission was given at a time when for an Arab it was a normal feature of life to take any number of wives and discard them afterwards. When such was the state of society, it seems to me that the arrangement made by Islam to protect the honour of woman and maintain the sanctity attached to the institution of holy wedlock was, perhaps, the best under the circumstances. If man is prevented from seeking a suitable helpmate, his life will be unhappy, besides he is likely to run moral risks as well. There is one accusation which

is often brought against the founder of Islam, i.e., that in his later years he married nine wives. True, but it is equally well-known that in the full flush of youthful vigour, as a young man of four and twenty, he married a woman much senior in age and remained faithful to her for twenty-six years. At fifty years of age, when the passions are sober, he is accused of marrying wives for sexual appetite. If you look at the women he married you will find that through everyone of them an alliance was made for his people or something was gained for his followers, or the women were in sore need of protection. Surely men's lives should not be judged hastily, and much less the lives of great men and prophets.

Social Eddicts

Islam condemns prostitution and prohibits all forms of gambling, which is one of the curses of modern civilization, and advocates total prohibition of strong drinks. In Muslim countries where Islamic law is in force, severe punishment is expected to be meted out for these vices.

Islam ennobled labour. Its founder was himself a worker and so were even his early disciples. Islam recognizes no social barrier between the master and the servant. The injunction is that a servant should be given the same food and clothing and have the same social privileges as his master. The well-known saying of the Prophet is "Pay the labourer before his sweat dries." The journey of Caliph Omar and his servant to Jerusalem is an illustration in point.

Islam and World Culture

A good deal could be said on this subject. Europe is indebted to Islam more than she cares to remember today. In the Middle Ages when Europe had not yet resurrected its ancient civilization which was destroyed due to barbarian invasions and its own internal ills, Muslim scholars and

scientists held high the torch of culture; they translated Greek and Roman classics, they taught medicine, sciences, art, poetry, history, religion, philosophy. A student of science knows that Jabir was a great chemist; he discovered nitric acid, sulphuric acid and *aqua regia*; the words *elementic*, alkali, etc., were derived from Arabic. Ibn Musa wrote on spherical trigonometry. Alberuni was distinguished as a botanist and he was in India for forty years to collect materials for his studies in science. Muslim scientists established observatories; Nur-ud-din wrote a classical work on the "Sphere." Muslim kings established free libraries and colleges and schools of learning. Haroon Al Rashid attached a school to every mosque he built; Cairo had a school of science and a free library on a grand scale. Cordova, Seville and Granada had famous universities.

In architecture, Muslims were very famous. The Taj Mahal at Agra is one of the noblest and the most beautiful buildings in the world.

Renowned Scholars

It is the glory of the Muslim world that its scholars relit the torch of learning, set about gathering wisdom from all sources including India and Greece and Egypt, improved on their own learning, kept up the pursuit of knowledge through many centuries, until they yielded place to European universities during the last two centuries or so. As early as the ninth century there were four Schools of Law under celebrated Ulemas situated in various parts of the Arabic world. Damascus and Baghdad, Naishapur and Bokhara, Cairo, Seville and Cordova, were great seats of learning. The University system of Europe and the culture of the Renaissance were largely derived from them. Starting, no doubt, with theology as their main preoccupation, their activi-

ties were then extended to canon law, to the study of grammar, lexicography, logic, metaphysics, arithmetic, mensuration and algebra, in each of which notable contributions were made.

Although Islam is supposed to be a rigid faith, these centres of thought made many contributions to rational philosophy and science, and even today the names of Ghazali, Abdul Hasan Al Ashari, Ibn Sina (who was called Avicenna in European literature, and Averroes of Spain) are well-known to scholars. Being a Sufi myself, I am naturally attracted to the Sufi philosophers and poets. Not only in mystic speculation, but in many other branches of enquiry, the world is greatly indebted to Arab and Saracenic influence. As in the case of India, so in early Muslim civilization there was no sense of false pride or exclusiveness in matters intellectual. Indian drama is indebted to the Greeks as also is the Indian medicine. The Muslims did not disdain to adopt the philosophy of Plato whom they took to their bosom under the Arabic name Aflaton, or to learn from Aristotle's many-sided genius. Mathematics owed a great deal to Brahmagupta and to Bhaskara, but some revolutionary progress was made by their Arab successors.

Arab alchemy and chemistry progressed vastly under the guidance of Rhazes and of Jabir (known in Spain as Gabir) and Ibn Sina, already referred to, as well as Mansur, who may well be termed one of the pioneers of chemistry. But none of these disdained to acknowledge indebtedness to other races and nations. The history of Astronomy which started under Egyptian and Hindu influences is typical. Caliph Mamun's academy at Baghdad and the Hall of Wisdom of the Fatimides were the originators of many of the modern scientific developments. The celebrated Haroon

Al Rashid got Ptolemy's 'Treatise on Astronomy' translated from the Greek, and observatories were established at Baghdad, where planetary observations were conducted and eclipses were studied. Observatories were also started in Persia, and Ulugh Bey, the grandson of Tamerlane, was himself a competent astronomer. The Arabs in fact introduced Egyptian and Indian science and literature, including folklore and fables like the *Panchatantra* into their own countries, but soon became creators and masters and not merely learners in these lines. Modern geography and the art of history owe not a little to Arab and Saracenic impetus. This exchange of culture and the friendliness of mutual obligation have been persisting throughout the range of literature and science although they seem to have lost their power and influence in recent times; and it is a matter for profound satisfaction that the Urdu literature of today can number among its ornaments not only Hali, and Akbar, and Iqbal, but also Puran Singh, Premchand, and Pandit Sunderlal, and scores of Hindu and Sikh brethren.

Need for True Fellowship

I have said that the test of the true function of religion is the promotion of brotherhood. It is the failure to realize in practice this truth that is responsible for so much of discord, dissension and disharmony today. In the past, protagonists of Islam and Hinduism jointly contributed to the production of modern Indian civilization. We see its impress on their art, architecture, dress and even music. Those of us who read the works of Omar Khayyam, Jalaluddin Rumi, and Kabir Das will realize that there is one artery which runs between Vedanta philosophy and Muslim Sufism. They lead us to the same goal. They teach us that living for one's own self is not real religion, and that we

have to live for humanity. This is the teaching of Islam—pure and simple, behind its rigid monotheism. Unfortunately, our differences, more often personal in character, have retarded the development of Hindu-Muslim culture through this blending of Vedanta and Sufism. Let us hope that every Muslim, every Hindu, every Christian, and the adherent of every faith in India will realize this supreme national need and sink their differences, and work for the good of the country without being in any way less sincere to their own faiths.

I cannot understand why the existence of many castes, creeds, religions, and persuasions in India should cause disunity and communal disharmony. The civilized countries of the world present us the example as to how various religions and diverse communities and interests are working together and co-operating with each other in the interests of harmony and unity of national life. Should we not, therefore, in the interest of our country's progress, sink our religious and communal differences and work for the good of one another? We are born, bred, brought-up and educated in this country and our dead bones are to be interred here. As such, India is as much the Muslims' own country as that of anybody's.

Finally, I cannot allow this humble message to close without making a most fervent appeal to the followers of all religions the world over, to remove the causes of friction which are sapping the very vitals of their lives and adding to the miseries and sufferings of each other, and create a new era of mutual goodwill and fraternity by absolving their differences, so that they may live in God's earth in peace and prosperity. May the Grace of Allah shine on us! May the blessings of God rain on us! Let us all march with amity, fraternity and unity along the path of glory trodden by the great Prophets, Saints and Mahatmas.

Islam—A Religion of Purification and Peace

Sri A.A. Mohamed Abdullah

[Kuala Lumpur]

The word *Islam* means peace or submission. It is clearly said in the Koran, "Surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam." Therefore, the teachings given under the name of Islam, disclose all such ways, as are sure to create peace in the world, if adhered to in daily life. Those who have not made peace with God and their fellow-beings, cannot be Muslims. Therefore, "a Muslim is one, from whose hand no harm goes to another."

The object of any religion is to help its followers to work out what is noble and good in their nature. Religion, therefore, is not only the sumtotal of belief, but doctrines and tenets which should be translated into practice. A faith without action is a dead-letter in Islam, and carries no merit in the eyes of God.

"A man's true wealth hereafter is the good he does in this world to his fellow-men. When he dies, people will say: 'What property has he left behind him?' But the angels who examine him will ask: 'What good deeds hast thou sent before thee?' " So says Mohammad. This being so, religion could not be confined to any time, place or person. This ideal should be the corner-stone of every religion revealed to humanity.

Origin

Therefore, the religion of Islam is existing from the very beginning of civilization; it was the religion of Adam and of all the prophets following him. For this reason, we Muslims do not look upon other religions as beliefs of human origin. We give them Divine Origin and view them all in their original purity. Prophet Mohammad has ruled: "Say: We believe in Allah, and (in) that which has been revealed

to us and (in) that which was revealed to Abraham and Ismael and Isaac, Jacob and the tribes, and (in) that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and (in) that which was given to the prophets from their Lord; we do not make any distinction between any of them, and to Him do we submit." (Koran, XI: 136)

If the word *Muslim* means one who submits to Divine Law and subordinates his will to the Will of the Most High, then he submits himself to the commandments contained in the Koran and the sayings of the Prophet Mohammad.

The Koran has been passed on to us uncorrupted, as drops of rain. The Muslim believes in Torah and Bible and other Books that were revealed to humanity. Koran descended upon humanity at a time when the world needed a fresh chastisement from God and an Apostle to correct the wrongs which then existed particularly in Arabia. Some hundreds of years had elapsed since the Elevation of Jesus Christ. His teachings had hardly touched Arabia. To mention, fresh rains—unpolluted rains from the sky—were needed to revitalize the already polluted rivers and channels of dogmas due to their contact with worldliness. The spiritual and temporal side of society needed rejuvenation, and hence a glorious Revelation was made by the Creator to humanity through his apostle Prophet Mohammad.

Articles of Faith

There are seven articles of faith in Islam. Belief in: (1) God, (2) angels, (3) sacred books, (4) divine messengers, (5) the hereafter, (6) measurement of good and evil by God, and (7) rising after death.

Oneness is the keynote to the conception

of the Divine Being in Islam. It admits of no participation of manifoldness. He is the "Lord of the worlds." He is Beneficent and Merciful.

Angels are not objects of adoration. They are functionaries in the working of the world on the physical plane. They act as Spirits which exhibit their attributes with as great an exactness as if they possessed a mind. Everything organic or inorganic seems to pursue a prescribed course and inanimate nature seems to be more faithful than we, intelligent beings. This law-abidingness in the dead matter is the work of an angel.

On the spiritual plane also, angels perform their functions. They act as inviters to good, bring messages from God to man, and guide them to good, and guard them against evil. When a soul reaches the height of spirituality and becomes devoid of all selfish grossness, angels act as ministers to his needs and become his servants.

Life After Death

The Holy Koran makes it clear that the state after death is a complete exhibition of our spiritual state in this life. Hence the good and bad conditions of the deeds and beliefs of a man, are latent within him, but in the life to come, they shall become manifest and clear as day light. In this way we shall account for our good or bad deeds in life.

The heaven and hell shall be the places of abode of the righteous and the wicked, respectively. Though physical names to the blessings and sufferings of the other world, are given in the Koran, in order to give some idea of things to come, yet another verse mentions that "No soul knows the blessings and joys which have been kept secret for it."

Life after death, though new in its nature, is the continuity of the present

life. Death in Islam is not annihilation or extinction, but the same cessation of the ever-progressive element, for the time being, which we observe in everything in the course of evolution, that when it finishes a course of one order, it enters into another. The interval is always attended with stagnation which is called *Burzaq*. This begins and ends with what are respectively termed death and resurrection in popular language. Hell is of a purgatorial nature. Islam, therefore, believes in a continuous life, the progress of which knows no bounds. Life passes through various stages of growth, and our sojourn on this earth-plane is one of them. The seven heavens of Islam are seven stages of progress, and our life continues till we merge in the Divine Essence.

Five Pillars of Islam

We have seen above that man's life has no end and continues to travel in all its progressive stages until it merges in the Divine Essence. The Book reveals that like everything in Nature, man enters into this world with a pure and untainted mind possessing the highest capacities with unlimited power besides being capable also of sinking to the "lowest of the low." One can reach the goal and avoid the abyss, if one receives proper guidance. Man possesses capabilities for sublimation and degradation. On one side, he clings to earth, seeing that he comes out of clay. He is an animal, nay, sometimes worse than that; on the other hand, he is the vicegerent of God on this earth; he receives obeisance from the angels and rises to the very borders of Divinity. The former is the beginning and the latter is his goal. The Koran came to uplift man from carnality to Divinity.

Islam does not take the soul as a different entity that descends from some-

where and mixes with the body. The soul, at its inception, lies concealed in the animal consciousness of man; it comes to the surface at a later stage; after which further developments make it perfect. Seven are its evolutionary states:

Ammarah—the commanding,
Lawwama—the self-accusing,
Mulhima—the inspired,
Mutmainna—at rest,
Radiyah—pleased with God,
Mardiyyah—pleased to God, and
Kamilah—the perfected.

Islam uplifts Ammarah to Kamilah. Islam teaches us to control our bestial elements and to merge in Divinity. To attain Kamilah, i.e., perfection, man should go through the above evolutionary and purificatory stages.

Now let me proceed to the structure on which the creed of Islam rests. Islam subjectively is a disposition to obey laws. It respects social order. To strengthen this disposition, Koran prescribes a course of disciplinary measures rightly called the five pillars of Islam.

1. The Formula of Faith,
2. Prayers,
3. Fasting,
4. Charity, and
5. Pilgrimage to Mecca.

"By no means shall you attain righteousness until you spend out what you love." This includes your occupation, food, drink, connubial companionship, wealth, family, business, friends, clothes, personal comforts and, above all, various objects of our adoration. These are our chief concerns and cause the whole struggle in life. They move our criminal tendencies if we are not scrupulously honest.

In prayers, we part with our occupations; in fasting with our foods, drink and connubial relations; and in charity with a portion of our wealth. Then comes the pilgrimage. We leave our family, friends, business and country and we part with our clothes and comforts covering ourselves with two sheets; and when we enter Hedjaz we abstain from disputes, quarrels and evil language. We observe strict fraternal relations with strangers, always proclaiming aloud our readiness to offer all that we possess to God. In the end we kill an animal.

Till then we had practically forsaken everything pertaining to the cravings of the passions and the demands of the animal within. That we had crushed. If, therefore, the last ceremony of the pilgrimage consists in killing a brute, it rightly symbolizes the killing of the flesh. It washes out man's sin, if performed in the right spirit. He discards the flesh and frees the soul. He makes himself a true Muslim.

Let me conclude with the following verse from the Koran: "It is not righteousness (it says) that you turn your faces towards the East and the West but righteousness is this that one should believe in Allah, and the last Day and the Angels and the Book and the Prophets, and give away wealth, out of love for Him, to the near of kin and orphans, and the needy and the way-farers and the beggars and for the captives; and keep up prayer and give alms and be performers of promises and be patient in distress and in affliction and in time of conflict."

Let us, therefore, create a Society of Universal Brotherhood. God bless us all.*

*A paper read at the *Conspicuous of Religions*, held under the auspices of the *Pure Life Society*, at Kuala Lumpur, Malaya.

The Main Features of Sufism

Sri Swami Sivananda

Sufism is liberal Islam with a colouring of mysticism. Sufism is Islamic in origin. It is known as the religion of Love, with Madhurya Bhava, based on the Platonic concept of the lover and the Beloved.

The word *Sufi* may be connected with the word *tasawwuf* (woollen garment), or with the Greek word *sofia* (wisdom). The Sufi ascetics are supposed to wear coarse garments, which is indicative of their disapproval of showy ward-robes worn by their worldly-minded co-religionists.

The Mohamedans think that Sufism is indigenous to Islam. Other scholars have traced an Indian origin of or an Indian influence on the Sufi doctrines. Indian mysticism and Oriental Christian mysticism have, no doubt, affected the later developments of Sufism.

Sufism practised in India is a blend of Persian Sufism and Hindu mysticism.

Sufi Saints

Lal Shahbaz, Mansoor, Shams Tabriez, Sachal, Rohal, Dalpat, Shah Inayat, Shah Latif, Bulleh Shah, Hafiz, Rumi, Jami, were all Sufi mystics.

The Sufi saints are as liberal and catholic as the Vedantin Sannyasins. They are very devotional, too. Their utterances or sayings have a wonderful directness, freshness, spontaneous loveliness and charm.

The Sufi mystic sees the Lord in all. He experiences cosmic vision. He beholds his Beloved everywhere and in all objects. He has no sense of possession. He is free from egotism, lust, greed, anger, pride. He is perfectly passionless and enjoys profound peace and poise. His state is beyond description. He is like the Jivan-mukta, or the liberated sage. He calls the heart as the Palace of the Beloved. He

does not care for dogmas, doctrines, creeds or sects. He has attained Para Bhakti or the supreme state of devotion.

Doctrines

Asceticism is an essential feature of Sufism. The Sufi consecrates all his acts, physical, mental and spiritual, to the will of God. Unity of existence, brotherhood of man, and self-surrender to the Lord, are the most vital doctrines of Sufism.

In Sufism, God has form. The Sufis recognize His formless aspect, too.

Sufism combines ecstasy and service of man. A Sufi wants to remain in the world and serve humanity, but endeavours to be above worldliness.

The Sufi literature describes the divine experience of ecstasy in a variety of ways such as sweetness, intoxication, perfume, sleep, death. Wine is a symbol of divine intoxication.

For a Sufi, music is a means to ecstasy. Music plays a very important part in Sufi religious exercises. The Sufis worship beauty.

Nasut means the finite human qualities. *Lahut* means the infinite qualities of God. Survival of individuality is *baqa*. *Fano* means complete annihilation of the lower self or the mystical realization of the union with God. It means dying alive or the sublimation of the ego by annihilating it.

Sadhana

Concentration, meditation, obedience to a Guru (Pir), poverty, discipline, fasts, penances, recitation of sacred words (*Zikr*), the use of rosary, rhythmic and controlled breathing, prayer, universal love, non-injury, detachment, introspection, dispassion, purity of heart, and self-control, are the means to attain God or the Beloved, through Divine Grace.

The Sufi aspirant looks in a mirror and concentrates on the Tri-kute or the space between the eye-brows in his own reflection in the mirror.

It is very difficult to practise the Bhava of the lover and the Beloved. This sort of Sufi Sadhana proves dangerous in the case of unregenerate, passionate practitioners, and leads to corruption. They mistake the intoxication caused by the drink of wine for Divine Intoxication and indulge themselves in drinking and sensuality. The aspirant should remain under the strict guidance of a Guru during his Sadhana period.

It is the spirit of a doctrine that is of primary importance. Its external forms are of minor value. Likewise, Sufism is to be

accepted in its absolute spiritual form, which is diffusion of the individual self in the Cosmic Self, rather than in its external allegorical allusions.

Hazrat Inayat, who was born in Baroda in 1882, and who was a famous musician, started the Sufi Movement in Europe in 1910. He founded the Sufi Order in California. He initiated the Sufi Order also in England, France, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany and Italy. He passed away in 1927.

Though the goal of life has the one ultimate destination, God or the Supreme Reality, the various paths leading to it are equally important in their own ways. So also is Sufism, which is one of the paths leading to Godhead.

The Sikh Approach to the Ultimate Goal of Life

Dr. Ishar Singh, M.B.B.S.

[Dehra Dun]

The real teachings of the Sikh religion are essentially the same as the fundamental tenets of other religions. Take the example of a waterfall. How lovely it looks! It can teach us all what we want to know about God and Creation. Reflect on it for a while. A waterfall consists of a sheet of water coming from somewhere in the hill and then it falls down breaking up into an infinite number of bubbles and waves. These exist in form for a short while, and then again get re-absorbed in the running sheet of water further ahead.

Similarly, the formless God assumes infinite forms constituting the whole of the creation and reunites His manifestations with Himself ultimately. All is God. What we, in Maya, see is infinite forms of God to whom we give our own imagination-conceived names, which in reality are like infinite waves. Each Jiva is like a bubble. A bubble has a base of some water which is

supporting it and from where it was formed and in which it will finally be absorbed. This portion of water can be compared to an individual entity.

The main teachings of all religions could be classified under five sections, i.e., about God, about creation, about prophets, about soul, and about action and its resultant fruits. I shall now describe the Sikh approach to these five divisions.

God is one. He is infinite, all-pervading, omniscient, omnipotent, the creator of the universe and also its preserver and destroyer. God's creation is numberless which is ever-changing and finite. Prophets are the messengers of God; they are one with God, and they are born with a definite mission to uphold Dharma and bring about peace, amity and spiritual beatitude. Every individual soul is a fragment of the Supreme Soul shrouded by Maya, and its ultimate goal is its diffusion in its

origin. There is the Divine dispensation of justice according to our actions on this earth-plane. The law of transmigration is infallible. The fate of the individual soul is the result of his actions. Thus some are destined to realize God and some have yet to pass through many more transmigrations. The ideal of human life is to eschew individual egoistic tendencies, vanity and vice, and surrender oneself to God, serve Him in every way and abide by His Will which is known through pure conscience.

Sikhism enjoins the practice of divine life which constitutes in the cultivation of pure thoughts and performance of pure deeds. The good and evil should be judged through the means of unbiased discrimination, and the right path should be adhered to at all events. Prayer has a significant role in the life of the individual which provides him a link to attune himself with the infinite. Meditation on the Supreme Truth, singing of the Divine Name, practice of virtues, service of the preceptor and humanity at large, are the different fundamentals of the Sikh doctrine.

To respect all prophets and the follo-

wers of other religions, to avoid greed, anger, lust and pride in all its forms, to stick to the path of honesty, brotherhood, and purity, and to see God in all and everywhere, are some of the main ideals in Sikhism.

The Sikh religion is based on universal brotherhood, mutual understanding, and adoption of divine life. We are apt to confuse the real religion with our social customs and ritualistic observances and modes of prayer. Real religion is the same everywhere, though social ethics differ according to regional and traditional influences. No one is particularly high or low in the eyes of the one God. An atheist is as much our brother and a child of God as a theist. No reason or rhyme should ever impel one to spurn another. To a true follower of religion, who is inwardly pure and outwardly effable and unostentatious, all creations of God are equal. Let us not be just merely passive theists but practical and active theists, and let us try to do whatever we can with wholehearted energy and modesty to disseminate the gospel of true religion.

A RETREAT AT SIVANANDA NAGAR

Away from the din of modern cities and yet not far removed from such amenities as are necessary for comfortable living—in a modest sense—the Sivananda Nagar (near Rishikesh, Northern Railway) offers ample facilities for rest-giving holidays as well as for settling down after retirement. Here in the sylvan solitude, in spiritually soothing atmosphere, on the bank of the Holy Ganga, many devotees spend their holidays in undisturbed spiritual contemplation and benefit from the saintly company of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. For this purpose they have constructed small residential quarters of their own. Anyone is welcome to do so, if one could afford. The land is provided free of cost. The construction charges for a single room come to about Rs. 2,000. For details, please write to:

The Secretary, Divine Life Society, P.O. Sivananda Nagar, Rishikesh, U.P.

Third Anniversary of the World Parliament of Religions

—Excerpts From Discourses—

The third anniversary of the World Parliament of Religions, originally convened on April 3, 4 and 5, 1953, was held at Sivanandanagar on the 3rd of the last month. On the following two pages are given short excerpts from the speeches made on this occasion. Apart from those referred to, a paper on Islam by Sri Gauri Prasad, published elsewhere in this issue, was read, while Sri Kanematsu, of Japan, spoke on the spiritual heritage of India, and Swami Guruparananda on the lives of the South Indian saints.

Know Thyself

(*Srimati Ellan K. Cable, Auckland,
New Zealand*)

It has been truly and wisely said, "Let no man lead unless he knows the way, and so the founders of all the great religions have been those who had found the Way for themselves, and given to the world their message according to the need of the time and place.

In the Epistle of St. James it is written: "Ye ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves," and the Christ said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," meaning thereby that through following his instructions, and by prayer, faith, unselfish love, forgiveness and spiritual endeavours, or by attaining the Christ-Consciousness, God could be realized.

Divine Love

(*Sri V. Brinivasan, Durban, South Africa*)

Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj says that the real, universal religion is the "religion of the heart." Love is the basis of this religion, because love is a common element in all of us. This love, in its practical aspect, is revealed in the form of selfless service. If we all serve others sincerely, without any expectation, we would be able to realize religious unity in a much better way. Sri Swamiji Maharaj is today the greatest living example of this religion of Love, the religion of selfless service.

Practical Religion

(*Sri Swami Satchidananda, Trincomalee,
Ceylon*)

The essence of all religious teachings is more or less culled in the immortal words of Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj: "Serve, love, give, meditate, realize; adapt, adjust, accommodate; be good, do good." There is ample evidence in all religious doctrines that the protagonists of various creeds have experienced the transcendental, superconscious state by,—at the primary stages of their religious life and ever after,—living these ideals in some form or other.

Unity of Existence

(*Sri Swami Chidananda, Sivanandanagar*)

Eko devah sarvabuteshu goodha, sarva vyapee sarvabhutantaralma: "One God is hidden in all beings—pervading everywhere as the Soul of all beings." The Rishis of yore had actually realized the reality of this truth in their very life, and out of the fullness of their experience, they wanted that this should become manifest in the activities of man on earth, that this should be expressed everywhere.

Satyam, satyam, punah satyam: "Truth, truth, again truth!" Truth should be expressed again and again. Therefore, such similar thoughts as on the oneness of mankind, the glory of selfless service, brotherhood, unity and co-operation—these thoughts have to be reiterated again and again. This

is the purpose of the anniversary celebrations of the World Parliament of Religions.

An Impressive Example

(Sri Nandlal C. Patel, Hong Kong)

I have seen the seven streams of the Ganges near Haridwar, and I have also seen here the same *saptadhara* (seven streams), or even more, in this great spiritual laboratory functioning under the great saint, Swami Sivananda, where many persons belonging to different religions have come and now live under the same roof, under the same Master, with full opportunities to practise their own religion, but, all the same, progressing towards the same goal, the same indivisible Truth.

Buddha's Teaching

(Rev. A. Thiradhamma, Bangkok, Thailand)

The Buddha says: "Seek your refuge in truth, not looking for any other refuge. The teaching that I have given you will exist after my death. He who sees my doctrine can see me." God has no body, but we have His Holy Name. We should repeat the Name. We should practise Swamiji's precept "Be good, and do good." If we practise this, God will live in our hearts.

Experience of The Divine Presence

(Mrs. Hanna Herrmann, Winterthur, Switzerland)

With the experience of the Divinity within, comes the experience of the same Divine Presence within our fellow-beings,—all the sense of goodwill, brotherhood and universal peace being implied in this wonderful fact.....we are all alike, all religions and all souls being the out-breathing of the One without a second, call it by what name you like.

Sikhism

(Sri Jitendranath Khullar, M.A., B.T., Sivanandanagar)

The whole of the essence of the philo-

sophy of Sikhism is given in the first verse in the *Granth Sahib*, which reads: "There is but one God His name is Truth. He is the Creator. He is free from fear and enmity. He is beyond time, immortal, unborn, formless and self-existent. He can be realized by the grace of the Guru." Guru Nanak says: "Devotion to God is the essence of all teachings. Great is His will. Make His will your own. Only then can you find Him."

Oneness of Spirit

(Sri Swami Jyotrimayananda Sivanandanagar)

Jesus Christ says: "Blessed are the pure in spirit, for they shall see God." What is this Spirit? It is the "Breath of God," says the Bible. In the language of the Koran, the "Spirit is the soul of God." In the language of the Vedanta, "Spirit is the stuff of God" (*Prajnanam Brahma*), and also, "That Spirit alone is all this" (*Purusha evedam sarnam*). This Spirit is realizable through various paths—for the busy and active man, through Karma Yoga; for the emotional type, through Bhakti Yoga; for the scientific-minded, through Raja Yoga; and for the intellectual type, through Jnana Yoga. All religions emphasize one or the other of these four Yogas. All are complementary to one another.

Religion and Commonweal

(Sri Swami Prajnanananda, Sivanandanagar)

Religion is the outward expression of the faith in man in the Hidden Power behind the universe. This Hidden Power is generally termed as God. Every religion believes in the existence of such a supernatural Force, and man with all his knowledge, capacities and inventions cannot alter the dispensations of the Lord.....Reli-

gion is the emotional expression of the common Spirit in man. Religion helps man to express the inner Divinity in him in every vibration of his existence.....Hence

there cannot be two opinions on the efficacy of religion in playing its unique role in maintaining peace, unity and happiness in the world.

Ashram News and Notes

Thirty-Fourth All-India Yoga-Vedanta Conference

The 34th All-India Yoga-Vedanta Conference, which is a half-yearly feature of the Divine Life Society, was held at Sivanandanaagar, Rishikesh, from 19th to 22nd April, under the presidency of His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

The conference was attended by a number of Mahatmas and other spiritual seekers. The promotion of practical religion, which is a natural expression of the universal law of the oneness of existence, the supremacy of the Divine over the undivine, and the brotherhood of man, was the main subject of the conference.

Several speakers, among them Sri Muniswami, M.P., a distinguished exponent of the *Tirukkural*, popularly known as the Tamil Vedas of the South, stressed the utmost desirability of the practice of the common ethical aspects of religion in one's daily life.

The following were some of those who spoke at the conference:

Swami Chidananda—Basic Tenets of Religion; Swami Krishnananda—Meaning of Yoga and the need for the practice of the Integral Yoga; Swami Jyotirmayananda—Life's Perspective according to Vedanta Philosophy, and the Yoga of Synthesis; Swami Shuddhananda—Concentration and Meditation, and Practice of Vedanta; Swami Prajnanananda—Path of Sadhana, Unity underlying all Faiths, and Bhakti Yoga; Swami Divyananda—Synthesis of Karma, Bhakti and Jnana.

Besides these, there were also other speakers who dwelt on subjects appropriate to the occasion.

The President, Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, gave inspiring and practical instructions on spiritual life in general, at the close of the last session of every day, through the means of songs and Kirtans.

The programme of the conference in-

cluded, among other features, group meditation and prayer classes, and elementary practice of Yogasanas and Pranayamas in the morning hours, and a series of special discourses on the Ramayana by Sri V. Thyagarajan and Pandit Sitarama Sastri, in the afternoon and at night.

Many of the speakers at the conference paid special attention to expound and present to the modern mind the philosophical and the scientific implication, the significance and the rationale of the practice of religion, which are quite apart from a spiritless routine of formal devotions and traditional observances.

The religious life was, the conference stressed, a living expression of the working of the Divine Law in every human being, not a theoretical enterprize of the accredited few, but rather an intensely practical way of living in and through the world "of names and forms" for the realization of the Supreme Spirit or God which is the designation of whatever reality there is ultimately.

The conference also decided to defer the 22nd and the 17th sessions of the All-World Religions and the Sadhus Federations, respectively, to December next, and thereafter to convene them once in every year instead of once in six months as previously.

The 20th Annual Meeting of the Divine Life Society was held on April 20, when Swami Chidananda, General Secretary, reviewed the activities of the institution during the past year, following which a general discussion on the promotion of its aims and objects took place.

Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj took an active and keen interest in the deliberations of the Yoga-Vedanta conference and guided its proceedings throughout.

Discourses

On April 5 and 6, Sri U. Muthuramalinga Thevar, M.L.A., a remarkable politician

from the Ramnad district of Madras State, who is noted for his zealous endeavours in the propagation of theistic ideals, spoke on the "identical approaches in Vedanta and Saiva Siddhanta," which the audience appreciated very much.

On April 9, Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj inaugurated the Bharat Sadhu Samaj conference, held under the auspices of the Paramartha Niketan, situated across the Ganges, the founder of which is Sri Swami Sukadevanandaji Maharaj. The conference was addressed by a number of renowned Mahatmas and others—among them Swamis Maheswaranandaji, Prem Puriji, Bhagavatanandaji, Sharvanandaji, Gangeswaranandaji, Sharananandaji, Sant Tukdoji, Goswami Ganesh Dutt, and the Union Minister Sri Gulzarilal Nanda. While inaugurating the conference, Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj stressed on the supreme ideal of selfless service and said how best the Sadhus could promote the welfare of humanity through this noble means, infused as they were supposed to be by the spirit of renunciation.

On April 13, Raja Mahendra Pratap, widely renowned for his great patriotism, who now lives near Dehra Dun and who is also the founder-editor of *The World-Federation*, spoke on the "ideal of one world government, and the essential unity of religion."

Sri V. Thyagarajan, of Pudukottah, did Kamba Ramayana Katha from 16th April to 4th May, which was noted for its engaging and impressive style with profuse interspersing of interesting allegories and pleasantries.

During the third week of April, Pandit Sitarama Sastri, who has distinguished himself by a great deal of research in the Valmiki Ramayana and devoted his efforts towards the removal of many popular misconceptions about the epic, gave a few discourses on the same subject.

Among others who also spoke at the Ashram's daily evening Satsanga were Prof. Chopra, of Rohtak; Prof. Ahulawalia, of Rupar; and Sri Subramanyam, formerly of Rangoon, who is now staying at the Ashram.

Music Performances

The following were some of the visiting aspirants who gave different musical performances during the month of April:

Vocal and violin recitals of Karnatic Ragas by Srimati Sankarambal, of Tanjore; violin recitals by Sri V. Rajamani Iyer, who conducts a music school at Delhi; vocal Karnatic recitals by Srimati Kamale, and Kumaris Rajam and Padma, of Delhi; and vocal Hindustani classical music by Sri Pal, Gwalior.

Receptions, Celebrations

Speaking at a reception at the Ashram on April 11, Sri Gulzarilal Nanda, Union Minister of Planning and Irrigation and Power, said: "I have tasted a bit of the bliss which Swamiji showers all round here. That bliss is in the atmosphere of the whole of this place, where in old times and recent days, Rishis thought, pondered, meditated and gave of this bliss to the world around..... So I go back strengthened with greater courage to face things which one has to face in life, and this life is becoming, in a way, more and more difficult, and therefore we need to tap this fountain-source of spiritual strength—we and all of us in this country and everywhere in the world."

Earlier, on the same day, Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj had received the Chief Minister of Ajmer, Sri Upadhyaya.

The Ashram celebrated the Ramanavami on April 19, and the Hanuman Jayanti on April 24, when special prayer services were held, and discourses appropriate to the occasion given.

Eye Camp

An Eye Camp is now being held under the auspices of the Sivananda Charitable Hospital, by Dr. Sivananda-Chellamma, M.B.B.S., D.O., of Madras. The Camp, which began on April 6, attended to over 140 eye patients, including refraction testing of the eye, and seven surgical cases such as the removal of cataract, needling, etc. Dr. Chellamma was assisted by Dr. K.V. Nair, M.B.B.S., of Madras, and the entire staff of the Ashram's Hospital.

Title Awards

The following were among those who received the titles mentioned hereunder from His Holiness Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj:

Pravachana Keshari: Sri U. Muthuramalinga Thevar, M.L.A.

Ramayana Pravachana Keshari: Pandit Sitarama Sastri.

Kamba Ramayana Jyoti: Sri V. Thyagarajan

Sangita Jyoti: Sri Vanaja; Srimati Sankarambal, Tanjore; Sri V. Rajamani, and Srimati Kamala Delhi.

Sangita Ratna: Kumari Rajam, Delhi.

Sangita Sudhakara: Kumari Padma, Delhi.

Nrityakalanidhi: Kumari Kirti Oza, Bhavnagar.

Upanayana and Namakarana

Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj gave his blessings in consecration of the *Upanayana* of Sri S. Ramakrishna and Sri S. Rajagopal, sons of Sri N. Srinivasan, of Madras) and Sri Narayana (son of Sri Krishna Rao), and also performed the *Namakarana* of the baby son of Srimati Nayanabala, B.A., of Surat; the boy was named Sri Prakash.

New Building

A new block of residential quarters named *Parvati Kutir*, was declared open after a simple ceremony, with prayer and Kirtan. This block is adjacent to the *Siva Kutir* situated on the hillock above the main road.

A.I.R. Recording

A number of Sankirtans by Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj were recorded for the All-India Radio on 14th April, at Sivanandanagar. The recording team was led by Sri A.L. Maini, Assistant Station Director, Delhi.

Farewells

On 7th April, the Ashram bade farewell to Mrs. Hanna Herrmann, of Winterthur, Switzerland, on the eve of her departure home after a stay of about six months at Sivanandanagar. She was presented with a farewell address, following which several speakers, among them Sri Swami Sivananda Maharaj, made brief speeches appropriate to the occasion.

A similar farewell reception was given to Sri V. Srinivasan, of Durban, on 10th April, before his departure for South Africa after a sojourn of over five months here. Sri Srinivasan is one of the active pioneers of the Divine Life movement in South Africa, and was instrumental, in co-operation with others, in establishing a number of Branches of the D.L. Society in the various parts of the Union.

Visiting Aspirants

The following were among those who

stayed at the Ashram for different durations during the month of April:

Dr. Sivananda-Chellamma, M.B.B.S., D.O., and Dr. K.V. Nair, M.B.B.S., Madras; Dr. Hetram Agarwal, M.D., Amritsar; Prof. Chopra, M.A., Rohtak; Sri Akhil Vinay, of Rajasthan; Pandit Sitarama Sastri formerly a research member of the Annamalai University, South India; and Sri V. Thyagarajan, Pudukottah.

A batch of eleven students from Patan, Gujarat, is at present undergoing elementary training in Yoga practice at Sivanandanagar during the period of their summer vacation.

Earlier, three sons of Sri H.S. Rao, of the Forest Research Institute Dehra Dun, spent a brief holiday at the Ashram when they were trained in the practice of elementary Yogic exercises.

Visitors

The following were among those who visited the Ashram during the month of April:

Sri K.C. Reddy, Minister of Production, India; Sri Gulzarilal Nanda, Minister of Planning and Irrigation and Power, India; Sri C.B. Gupta, Minister of Industries and Health and Civil Supplies, Uttar Pradesh; Sri Upadhyaya, Chief Minister, Ajmer; Sri C.P. Sharma Deputy Minister of Transport and Revenue, U.P.; Dr. K.M. Lal Director of Medical Services, U.P.; Lt.-Col. Bhola Nath (ret'd.), Ambala; Dr. Wolf von Arnim, Second Secretary, Embassy of the Republic of Germany at New Delhi; Dr. Kaupsch, of the West German Radio; Sri Nandlal C. Patel, Hong Kong; Sri Swami Atmananda, of the Yogoda Satsanga, who was accompanied by three members of his institution; Sri K.C. Gupta Executive Engineer, Patiala, who is a Patron of the Divine Life Society; Sri T. Gelblum, of Tel Aviv, Israel; and Sri L.V. Hirsch, Jersey City, U.S.A.

Life Members

Sri Swami Swaroopananda (Sri Erich Pierschel of Germany) has become a Life Member of the Divine Life Society.

Sri Venu Gupta, eleven-year old son of Sri K.C. Gupta, of Patiala, who is a Patron of the D.L. Society, has been recently-enrolled as a Life Member of this Institution by his father.

The Gospel of Lord Buddha—the Only Way to World Peace

Sri Swami Sivananda's Buddha Parinirvana Jayanti Message

Salutations to Lord Buddha who is the refuge of all mankind, the fountain-source of peace, bliss, love, light and wisdom !

Two thousand and five hundred years ago, Lord Buddha descended on this earth. Even today, He lives in our hearts. He lives as Love. The awe-inspiring grandeur of His life and the celestial radiance of His serene face, inscribed indelibly on the tablet of our heart remind us of the Great Truths that He illustrated in His Enlightened Life, viz., that Love is the Law of Divine Life, that true Love is absolutely egoless and selfless, self-sacrificing, sublime and serene, and that absolute truthfulness, harmlessness and purity, ethical perfection and a spirit of renunciation, are the invariable counterparts of Cosmic Love.

Lord Buddha lived twenty-five centuries ago but He lived for *our* sake. At no time did mankind need His Guidance as now, but would humanity heed His flaming Words of Wisdom ? Man has wilfully blinded himself with selfishness, lust, greed and egoism, and, holding the staff of materialism and armed with weapons of self-destruction, he is marching fast towards his doom. Lord ! Thou art an Ocean of Compassion ! Pray, save mankind today, as You did reform and transform the murderer and made him desist from the evil ways.

Materialistic civilization has gone far enough to prove its worthlessness. Study the Life of Lord Buddha. Even the multi-millionaire today cannot command the material enjoyments that were offered to the Lord, before His Renunciation. But He knew that the sense-objects only gave pain and not pleasure. Deluded man ! Are you wiser than He was, that you are ceaselessly engaged in producing newer gadgets to titillate your senses ? In renunciation is supreme joy ; in the cultivation of cosmic love is supreme joy ; in selfless, self-sacrificing service of humanity is supreme joy ; in Self-realization is supreme joy ; Supreme Joy is Nirvana. Lord Buddha lived, renounced all kingly pleasures, practised intense penance, attained illumination, and propounded the Four Great Truths and laid out the Noble Eightfold Path, in order that you—for whom He had, and will ever have the greatest love and compassion—might enjoy happiness and peace. What foolishness, and what great loss it is that while the Light shines brightly, you blindfold yourself and wilfully march towards your own detriment.

Awake, arise ! It is not too late, yet. On this supremely blessed and auspicious occasion of the 2500th Parinirvana Jayanti of Lord Buddha, let there be a world-wide revival of the spirit of love and goodwill that Gautama embodied in Himself. On this blessed day, may every man and woman resolve to tread the Noble Eightfold Path and attain Nirvana ! Let all the leaders of all the nations of the world humbly bow down at the lotus-feet of this Supreme Monarch who even today reigns, perceptibly or imperceptibly, over the hearts of the entire Mankind, nay, the entire creation. May all pray for Enlightenment : and thus, may all loyally follow the glorious example set before us by Lord Buddha.

The Life and Teachings of the Enlightened One must be studied by everyone, every day. This is the best way to conquer Mara, Maya or Satan. Meditate upon His Life and Teachings. Then, try to mould your own life on the pattern of His. Scrupulously adhere to the Noble Eightfold Path. Be good and do good. Let your heart be filled with compassion for all beings. And, let this compassion flow out in the form of goodwill towards all and service of all. Thus and thus alone is it possible for man to attain to supreme bliss and the world to enjoy peace and prosperity.

May His blessings be upon you all on this auspicious day ! Om Buddham Sharanam Gachchhami !

Swami Sivananda's Teachings In Japanese

Sri Seicho Taniguchi, of Tokyo (78 Onden, 3 Chome, Shibuya-Ku), has brought out a new Japanese publication titled *Higan-e-Itaru Mitsu*, which contains a collection of Sri Swami Sivananda's writings from *Hatha Yoga*, *Sure Ways of Success in Life and God-realization*, several issues of *The Divine Life* and a few of *The Yoga-Vedanta Forest University Weekly*. The publication is beautifully got up and is available from the above address.

In Spanish

Sri Orlando Corbanini, of Buenos Aires (Acevedo 1687, Banfield-FCNGR), who has already translated and published the Spanish edition of Sri Swami Sivananda's *Kundalini Yoga*, in co-operation with the Editorial KIER, Buenos Aires, has now brought out a similar edition of *Hatha Yoga*, which has an introductory article on Swami Sivananda by Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar. The book is profusely illustrated with Yogic postures. Both these publications are available from the translator.

In Russian

As announced earlier, Sri V. Olshansky, of Tehran (Av. Naderi, Bahar Street, 14 Kutche, Bahar), has published the first Russian edition of *What Becomes to the Soul After Death*, and has now commenced his Russian correspondence course in Yoga. The first Discourse (of 52 pages) has already been released, and is titled *Practical Occultism and Yoga*, by Swami Sivananda.

In Telugu

The first Telugu edition of Sri Swami Sivananda's publication titled *Conquest of Anger*, translated by Sri N. Venkata Subba Rao, B.A., of Ellore, is now available from the Sivananda Publication League, P.O. Sivananda Nagar, Rishikesh, U.P., at Annas -/8/- (postage extra). Sri Venkata Subba Rao had earlier brought out a Telugu edition of Sri Swami Sivananda's commentaries on the *Narada Bhakti Sutras*, which is also available from the same source at Rs. 2/-.

Notice

All associates of the Divine Life Society residing outside India and all those who are in touch with Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj from abroad are requested to note that no remittance of money should be made by currency notes through post, either for buying books, or as donation, or as a subscription to any of the Society's periodicals. Money should generally be remitted through banks which are represented in India directly or indirectly. Small amounts such as for reply postage or towards the subscription of a periodical may be sent by International Postal Coupons, or in case of the Commonwealth countries and the British administered territories, by British Postal Orders.

The Secretary, The Divine Life Society, P.O. Sivananda Nagar, Rishikesh, U.P.

Edited and published by Sri Siva Prem for the Divine Life Society, and printed at the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University Press, P.O. Sivananda Nagar, Rishikesh (Himalayas)